A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Thursday, December 15. 1709.

I Have given you formerly an Abridgment of the Affair of impriſoning a Man in *Scotland* for ſetting up the Common-Prayer—(I call it ſo, *not that it is ſo*, but becauſe ye will have it be ſo, right or wrong); for really the Diſpute is his being a *Clergy-man* or a *Lay-man*. And really, Gentlemen of the Church of *England*, if ye will allow this Man to be a Miniſter, either of the Church of *England*, as he calls himſelf, or of any Church at all, being ordain'd by the Biſhops who are depos'd by Law, you may leave off diſputing againſt the Ordination of the *Diſſenters*, or of any Body elſe. The Pope may ordain Miniſters for you every Day, and the Pretender make Biſhops for you, and your *Epiſcopal* Church in *Scotland* may be founded upon the immediate Succeſſion ſo boaſted of, and ſo little prov'd in the World.

Indeed I cannot ſee any Reaſon to prove, the Ordination of the Exauctorate Biſhops in *Scotland* to be Legal, but what equally proves the Power of the Pretender to appoint Biſhops in *Scotland*—— And if this ſhould be granted, it would make the Revolution a merry Tale indeed, and a meer Noſe of Wax to the Party—— So, I think, I need ſay no more of it.

Upon this Suppoſition, however the Judges *or Lords of the Seſſion* in *Scotland* have acted—in the Caſe of this Priſoner—when his Bill of Suſpenſion, as they call it, was brought before them—— They had the

the Opinion of the ableſt Lawyers in *Scotland* on the Head *Pro* and *Con*; the Validity of the Ordination of Miniſters by the Exauctorate Biſhops was debated and deſervedly exploded——And if any asks, by what Law, I ſhall be ready to ſtate the Caſe, and make it appear, as it did, upon hearing, that it is *that very Law*, which ſet up *Epiſcopacy* in *Scotland*; the very Law by which it was eſtabliſh'd, which founds it upon the King's Authority only, which Authority muſt of Courſe be ſufficient to depoſe it. Upon theſe Arguments learnedly debated on both hands, the Validity of the Ordination by Exauctorate Biſhops was rejected, and this Mr. *Greenſhields* according ly voted to be eſteem'd as a *Lay-man*——— And in the Conſequence of this, his Impriſonment, for Contempt of the Authority of the Magiſtrates, was voted Legal, and confirm'd by the Lords of the Seſſion; *Yeas* 12, *Nays* 3.

Indeed it could be no otherwiſe; for had the Lords of the Seſſion given any other Vote, the Laws of *Scotland*, as eſtabliſh'd by the Revolution, muſt have been overthrown; for if the Revolution be not valid, the Fabrick, *built upon it as a Foundation*, muſt fall of Courſe; to leave the Authority of Biſhops to the Biſhops depos'd by the Revolution, and to leave the Authority of King to the Race depos'd by the Revolution, is but the ſame Thing——— And thus you ſee, Gentlemen, what the Diſpute in *Scotland* drives at, even overthrowing the Revolution, reſtoring the depos'd Biſhops, and conſequently reſtoring the depos'd Pretender; and it is very happy, that theſe Things, ſo exact a Connection, diſcover themſelves ſo plainly, I hope in in Time, your Eyes will be open'd more effectually.

But why may they not be eaſie with the *Epiſcopal* People in *Scotland*? Say our ignorant Complainers —— Why may they not let them alone to worſhip God their own Way? Why ſhould not the *Presbyterians* bear with *Epiſcopal* People in *Scotland*, as the *Epiſcopal* People bear with *Presbyterians* in *England*? —— I know, this is the great Clamour among you——Come, Gentlemen, let us examine the Caſe a little—and ſee, whether there is Room to aſk theſe Queſtions or no—and whether they cannot be anſwer'd?

What is it you would have let alone, and who is it you would have worſhip God their own Way? Is it barely the *Epiſcopal* People in *Scotland*, or is it the profeſs'd *Non-Jurors*? —— And take it where you will.

As to the *Epiſcopal* People, they really have a Toleration greater than any *Diſſenters* in *England* ever had, or ever had the Face to aſk ——— *Viz.* By the ... Act, firſt Parliament *William* and *Mary*, all that were *Epiſcopal* in their Judgments, if they would take the Oaths to the Government—tho' they did not conform to *Presbyterian* Church-Government, yet were continued in their Churches—and there an Hundred and Fifty of them yet remain, enjoying the Church, the Manſe or Perſonage-Houſe, and the Benefice to this Day——If this be not Toleration, let them tell us what is—No *Diſſenter* in *England* enjoys any thing like it.

Well, the next Thing is *Jacobitiſm*——— Now to ſhew the Moderation of the Church of *Scotland*, it may not be amiſs to compare it with the Church of *England* Practice—— and you ſhall find, their Forbearance as much exceeds the Church of *England* Forbearance, as their Toleration exceeds the Church of *England* Toleration——— By this you will ſee clearly, where all this Miſchief begins——And here you will find, the Church of *Scotland* enclin'd to be eaſie with theſe People too— The *Non-Jurors* were, nay, and are, *to this Hour* all preaching undiſturb'd —— Their Meeting-Houſes in *Edinburgh* are all open as before; in ſeveral of them they read the Common-Prayer, no Body moleſted them; they pray for Queen *ANNE*, or *James* VIII. for *either* or *neither*, juſt as they pleaſe——— What would ye have more, Gentlemen? Would ye have the Church of *Scotland* tolerate *Jacobitiſm*? Let us ſee, where the Church of *England* goes this Length with the *Jacobites*——And when you do this in *England*, we may ſay farther.

I am for as much Liberty in Religious Matters as any Man in *Britain*—And when I look on the Liberty enjoy'd by all Kinds of People in *Scotland*, partly by Toleration, partly by Connivence; I cannot but say, no reasonable Man can ask more of them—No Violence is offer'd to any, but such as force the Government to it———— The Common-Prayer was read openly undisturb'd, and pass'd over even by those, who were as far from approving it as any Body—and there need not have been the least Disturbance in *Scotland*—if there had not been something more in it than a Religious Liberty.

But these People are Aggressors in all the Broils you hear of, *I say in all*, and I think, I may challenge them to show one Step in which they are not so—— They evidently push at the Government, and push at the Church, not content to be overlook'd and conniv'd at; they will have the Liberty they talk of in Defiance of the Government, and in Spight of the Kirk, and in Breach of the Constitution—And you cannot expect the People of *Scotland* will yield to this——They insist upon it, that by the Union they ought not to have it impos'd upon them, and that the Innovations offer'd are contrary to their Constitution, establish'd by the Union—They are willing to overlook and forbear as much as any, but when their Establishment is push'd at, their Authority contemn'd, and their Jurisdiction declin'd; this is overthrowing their Foundation, and you cannot expect they should consent tamely to be so us'd.

I think, I have stated this Case impartially, I am sure I desire to do so—And I cannot but earnestly recommend it to several Kinds of People to examine and consider of it.

1. To the *Dissenters*, who are impos'd upon by their own Notions, or other Peoples Suggestions, to believe, that the Church of *Scotland* is less charitable or less moderate, than they wish they were—— Pray, Gentlemen, make the Case your own, and tell us then, what you would do in like Cases— How much farther could you go, than the Church of *Scotland* goes?— Either their Establishment is founded upon the Laws, or it is not; either their Act of Security is incorporated in the Act of Union, or it is not; Would you give up your Liberties and dear-bought Rights? Would you break the Union? Would you overthrow your own Constitution, to encourage and introduce Jacobitism and a depos'd Authority, or would you stand to it, and defend them?— Would you not think it enough, that a sixth Part of all your Parish-Churches and Benefices were granted to the *Episcopal* Party, that Meeting-Houses and Common-Prayer were wink'd at, and conniv'd to the *Jacobites*? Would you think it reasonable, that your Judicatories should be disown'd, and your Jurisdiction declin'd? And would you not think it your Duty to defend your establish'd Legal Right by the Law?— I wish, such among the *Dissenters* as have been impos'd on this Way, would open their Eyes a little, and not come under the Reproof of the Text, of judging a Matter before they hear it.

2. To the moderate Church of *England* Men—That are famous for their Love of Liberty, Tenderness to *Dissenters*, and Zeal for all Kind of Constitution-Right——— A Sett of Gentlemen these are, upon whose Integrity and Honour the Civil Rights of *Britain* are in a great Measure establish'd—And who are the Strength and Glory of *England*?—— These are they, against whom the Fury and Malice of the *High-Flying* Party is bent, and who they would fain divide now, under the scandalous and foolish Terms of *Old Whig* and *New Whig*—To these I would humbly address this Paper, and entreat them to examine nicely the Case, and judge like themselves calmly and impartially, Whether the Church of *Scotland* does not act by all the Rules of legal Justice, and indeed by all the possible Steps of Moderation, Temper and Tenderness, that can be desir'd? Whether she does not yield more than can be reasonably ask'd of her, and whether more Favour, and upon better Terms, is not granted to *Episcopacy* and *Dissenters* in *Scotland*, than to *Presbyterians* in *England*? And upon the Result of this Examination it will appear, whether

whether there is Room for these Clamours or no——— And I shall proceed upon this Head in my next.

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N. B. His Mother, the Widow of the late Mr. *Christopher Bartlett*, lives at his House in *Goodman's-Fields*, and is very skilful in the Business of her own Sex.